

Maastricht University graduate surveys 2017

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ROA Fact Sheet

ROA-F-2017/1

Researchcentrum voor Onderwijs en Arbeidsmarkt | ROA
Research Centre For Education and the Labour Market | ROA

Maastricht University graduate surveys 2017

To what degree does Maastricht University succeed in preparing its students for the labour market? What are the short and medium term career paths of Maastricht University alumni, and how do they look back on their study in Maastricht? In this factsheet, the most important results of a 2016 survey amongst three cohorts of Maastricht University alumni are presented. The first cohort graduated in the academic year 2014-2015 (1.5 years prior to the survey), the second cohort graduated in 2010-2011 (5 years prior to the survey) and the third cohort in the academic year 2005-2006 (10 years prior to the survey).^{1,2}

Position in the labour market

Five to ten years after graduation, around 96% of the Maastricht University alumni have paid employment. Overall, approximately 4% of graduates in both cohorts reported to be out of the labour force. Important reasons for inactivity include participating in further education or taking care of children or relatives. A small percentage of graduates is looking for work. Table 1 gives a more detailed overview of graduates' unemployment rates – that is, the proportion of graduates who are currently not working but who are searching for work – by cohort and faculty. Overall, 7% of the 2014-2015 cohort is currently unemployed, while this only applies to 2% of the 2010-2011 cohort and 2% of the 2005-2006 cohort.³

In the 2014-2015 cohort, unemployment rates are highest among Law graduates. However, in the 2010-2011 cohort, unemployment rates are the highest among Psychology and Neuroscience graduates, while in the 2005-2006 cohort the highest rate is seen for Arts and Social Sciences graduates.⁴ We can conclude that labour market participation is higher for the 2010-2011 and 2005-2006 cohorts of Maastricht University graduates, but is considerably lower for the 2014-2015 cohort.

Table 1
Percentage of students who are unemployed

	% unemployed		
	2014-2015	2010-2011	2005-2006
Humanities and Sciences	5	0	x
Business and Economics	0	1	2
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	5	2	2
Arts and Social Sciences	6	2	4
Psychology and Neuroscience	14	5	2
Law	15	0	0
Maastricht University	7	2	2

x = too few cases

Trends in unemployment

To what extent has the recent economic crisis affected labour market opportunities of Maastricht University graduates since 2008? An indication can be found in the average unemployment rate of Maastricht University graduates, as reported by the surveys that were held between 2005 and 2016. For twelve waves of the surveys, unemployment information of the three cohorts is available. For the two cohorts that have been on the labour market 5 or 10 years, no visible trend in unemployment rates can be detected. Thus, the most recent economic crisis does not seem to have had an influence on the unemployment rate of Maastricht University alumni 5 to 10 years into their labour market career. Nevertheless, a notable increase in unemployment rates can be observed for alumni one year after graduation, between 2007 and 2013 (see Figure 1). However, since 2014, the unemployment rate for alumni one year after graduation has been steadily decreasing again but remains above the pre-crisis level of unemployment. In Appendix A, yearly unemployment rates are reported per faculty.⁵

1 Of the 2014-2015 cohort, 2778 respondents were approached, of whom 21% responded. For the 2010-2011 cohort, of the 2451 alumni approached, 33% responded. Finally, for the 2005-2006 cohort, of the 2443 alumni that were approached, 36% responded.

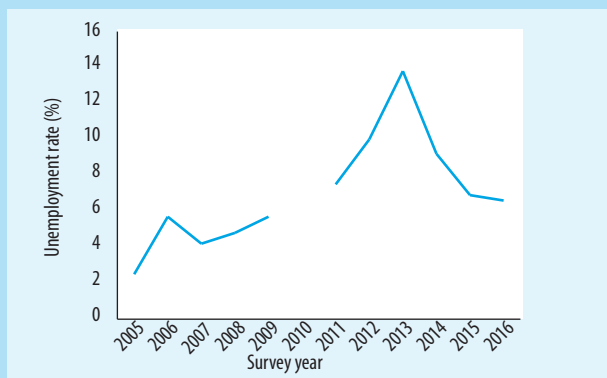
2 The reader should keep in mind that the mix of studies offered by Maastricht University the respondents graduated from may vary between the three cohorts.

3 The unemployment rate might also vary within faculties. For example, in case of the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences, the unemployment of Medical alumni is 0% 1.5 years after graduation, whereas for Health and Life Sciences alumni the unemployment rate among the same cohort is 8%.

4 It has to be noted that in the 2005-2006 cohort too few cases from Humanities and Science were available for statistical analysis.

5 Compared to preceding years, in 2015 and 2016 we use a slightly different definition of employment status in the surveys among alumni who graduated 5 and 10 years prior to the survey. Whereas prior to 2015 a respondent had to report a working week of at least 12 hours to be considered as employed, from 2015 onwards the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition applies, whereby all those who reported at least one hour of work are considered to be employed. In practice this makes little difference, since the vast majority of those employed are working fulltime, but it is possible that a small part of the change in unemployment in 2015 in those cohorts can be attributed to the definition change.

Figure 1
Trends in unemployment¹ one year after graduation



¹ This survey was not administered in 2010

Job characteristics

It is important that graduates' education matches the requirements of their jobs well, since the match determines the extent to which they can actually use the knowledge and skills they have learned at university.⁶ Furthermore, the quality of the education-to-job match is known to be positively related to job satisfaction, career opportunities, and wages. An important indicator of the quality of the fit between education and the job is the vertical match (i.e., whether graduates are working in a job that requires an academic master's degree). Table 2a shows the vertical match between graduates' current job and their level of education, for all three cohorts.

Table 2a
Percentage of students who have a vertical match¹

	% working at university level or higher		
	2014-2015	2010-2011	2005-2006
Humanities and Sciences	60	85	x
Business and Economics	62	71	81
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	73	88	80
Arts and Social Sciences	46	66	68
Psychology and Neuroscience	80	83	87
Law	60	79	81
Maastricht University	67	78	80

¹ university level means at least a master degree from university (WO).
x = too few cases

Table 2a clearly shows that the vast majority of graduates succeed in finding a job at an appropriate level. However, the results of the vertical match are substantially different for the three cohorts. Among graduates from Maastricht University as a whole, the proportion of well-matched

respondents decreases from 80% for the oldest cohort to 67% for the youngest cohort. Although there are some fluctuations between the cohorts, in general we see lower proportions of well-matched graduates in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and relatively high proportions in the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences and Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience.⁷ The observation for Humanities and Science graduates in 2014-2015 is based on very small numbers, and so should be treated with caution.

Table 2b presents numbers on the horizontal education-to-job match. This indicator measures the proportion of Maastricht University graduates who currently work in a job that requires their own or a related field of study. Again, it should be noted that most graduates succeed in finding a job in a field that well-matches their field of study. The three cohorts have different matching rates, with the results being most positive for the 2010-2011 cohort. Five years after graduation, 82% of the Maastricht University graduates are working in a job that matches well with their field of study, while 1,5 and 10 years after graduation, respectively 72% and 75% of the Maastricht University graduates are working in their own or a related field of study. For these two cohorts, the underlying reasons for a horizontal mismatch might differ. Shortly after graduation, a horizontal mismatch is often related to labour market conditions not allowing graduates to find a job that matches the field of study, as well as voluntary choices preferring a job in a different field. Ten years after graduation, people have had a chance to make a career, and upward job mobility often comes with more 'generic' positions (such as managerial positions) not directly related to the initial field of study.

Table 2b
Percentage of students who have a horizontal match

	% working in own or related field of study		
	2014-2015	2010-2011	2005-2006
Humanities and Sciences	60	90	x
Business and Economics	72	83	79
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	81	90	77
Arts and Social Sciences	49	68	46
Psychology and Neuroscience	71	77	75
Law	70	79	76
Maastricht University	72	82	75

x = too few cases

Next to differences between the three cohorts, we observe differences between the faculties. Overall, graduates from

⁶ See for example: R. van der Velden (2011), De effecten van betrouwbaarheid van onderwijsdiploma's op arbeidsproductiviteit: toepassing van een simulatiemodel, In: J.Dronkers (ed.), Goede bedoelingen in het onderwijs: Kansen en missers, boekaflevering Mens en Maatschappij, pp 27-49.

⁷ For the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences, a strong difference is again visible. Where medical students all find a university level job, graduates of the latter studies are less often vertically matched: in 55% (2014-2015), 82% (2010-2011), and 90% (2005-2006) of the cases.

the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences show relatively low proportions of well-matched graduates. There is little systematic difference between the remaining faculties. Five years after graduating, alumni from the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences show relatively good horizontal match probabilities. Alumni from the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences also are well-matched. It should be noted, however, that within the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences, a strong distinction can be seen between the study of Medicine and the studies of Health and Life Sciences. Because of the very specific nature of their study, Medicine graduates show a considerably better horizontal match in all three cohorts (2014-2015: 95%, 2010-2011: 98%, 2005-2006: 95%) than the graduates of Health and Life Science studies (2014-2015: 71%, 2010-2011: 85%, 2005-2006: 71%).

Table 3
Average monthly income and weekly working hours

	gross income per month (median)			regular working hours per week (median)		
	2014 - 2015	2010 - 2011	2005 - 2006	2014 - 2015	2010 - 2011	2005 - 2006
Humanities and Sciences	2.409	x	x	40	42	x
Business and Economics	2.875	4.700	5.650	40	45	45
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	2.725	3.500	4.075	38	40	36
Arts and Social Sciences	1.925	2.780	3.725	38	40	39
Psychology and Neuroscience	2.105	2.800	3.300	36	40	32
Law	2.510	3.600	4.600	40	40	38
Maastricht University	2.550	3.707	4.525	40	40	40

x = too few cases

Income and working hours

Table 3 shows the average monthly income of alumni and their average weekly working hours. Maastricht University alumni have a median income of €2.550 per month 1,5 years after graduation. This increases to €3.707 5 years after graduation and to €4.525 10 years after graduation. Although the income patterns across disciplines slightly differ between the different survey years, Business and Economics graduates consistently show the highest monthly earnings and graduates from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience the lowest.⁸ It should be noted however that graduates of the faculty with top earners (Business and Economics) also report the highest average working hours.

⁸ The median income of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences graduates, is strongly influenced by the median income of the Health and Life Sciences studies. Medical graduates (a) have a higher starting salary and (b) are the best paid alumni 10 years after graduation, with a median income of €6.350. Due to the structure of their career paths, Medical alumni also display the biggest income growth between five and ten years after graduation.

International orientation of Maastricht University and its graduates

It appears that the international orientation of Maastricht University and the fact that English is the main language of instruction in many study programmes continue to attract increasing numbers of international students for all faculties. It is interesting to see whether this international orientation is extended beyond the time of being a student at Maastricht University, in the form of high percentages of graduates working abroad. Table 4 shows per faculty the percentage of Maastricht University alumni of the various cohorts currently working inside and outside the Netherlands. For Maastricht University as a whole, 32% of the alumni of 2014-2015 cohort is working abroad, while the same applies to 43% of the alumni of the 2010-2011 cohort and 27% of the alumni of the 2005-2006 cohort. These numbers include foreign students who returned to their home country after graduation.

To distinguish between international careers of alumni born in and outside the Netherlands, Appendix A includes Table 9.⁹ From this table, it becomes clear that the (32%) alumni of the 2014-2015 cohort working abroad exists of 5% Dutch alumni, 20% foreign alumni working in their country of origin and 7% foreign alumni working in a country outside the Netherlands which is not their country of birth. Table 9 moreover shows an explanation for the relative low percentage of alumni working abroad for the cohort 2005-2006. Of that cohort, 77% of the alumni in the dataset are Dutch, which is higher than in the 2014-2015 (65%) and 2010-2011 (55%) cohort.¹⁰

Looking at all three cohorts, considerable variation exists between the faculties. Graduates of the Arts and Social Sciences and Humanities and Science Faculties are particularly internationally active, while for Law and especially Health, Medicine and Life Sciences graduates' international mobility is relatively rare.¹¹

Table 9 (in Appendix A) shows that the group of alumni working in the Netherlands mainly consists of Dutch alumni. This holds for all cohorts and for all, but one, faculty: 23% of all alumni from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences are foreign born and work in the Netherlands 1,5 years after graduation. This is exactly the same percentage as Dutch alumni working in the Netherlands. The Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience is the faculty which has the highest percentage of foreign alumni working in the

⁹ Keep in mind that percentages are based on small numbers of observations.

¹⁰ Of the 2014-2015 cohort the response among foreign alumni is relatively low.

¹¹ It should be noted that these differences are closely related to the study programs offered. It is not so obvious for example that a medicine diploma from the UM can be used in another country than the Netherlands.

Netherlands of the cohort 2005-2006. The faculties of Law and Humanities and Sciences 'lose' their Dutch students to the labour market of foreign countries the least.

The pattern of diminished mobility for the older cohorts can be seen in all faculties, despite the large differences in the absolute level of international mobility.

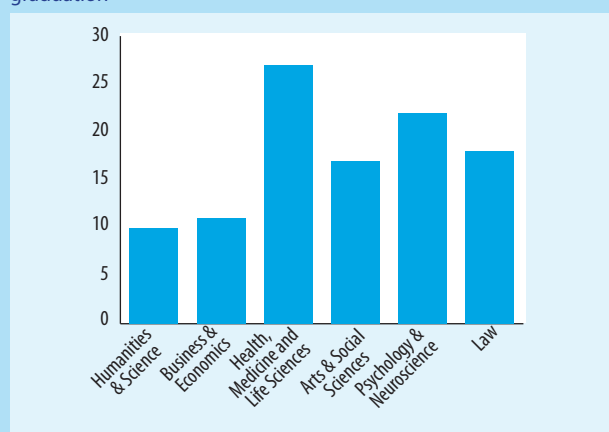
Table 4
Percentage of alumni working abroad

	% working abroad		
	2014-2015	2010-2011	2005-2006
Humanities and Sciences	70	70	x
Business and Economics	40	58	42
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	14	14	6
Arts and Social Sciences	55	70	51
Psychology and Neuroscience	44	53	20
Law	41	34	12
Maastricht University	32	43	27

x = too few cases

Maastricht University is geographically located in the Euregio Maas-Rijn (EMR). As such, it is interesting to see how many graduates remain in the EMR after graduation. Figure 2 presents these numbers for alumni 5 years after they graduate. The figure shows that alumni from the Faculty of Humanities and Science and the School of Business and Economics are relatively unlikely to be employed in the EMR. Alumni from the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences are relatively likely to be employed in the Euregio Maas Rijn. Overall, it should be noted that most students do not work in the EMR five years after graduation. Only 18% of all alumni work in the EMR.

Figure 2
Percentage of students working in the Euregio Maas-Rijn 5 years after graduation



International orientation, of jobs and alumni

Graduates from the 2010-2011 cohort were asked to report the extent to which they thought that their job offered the

opportunity to work internationally, and whether they felt that international opportunities were important to them. We also asked whether they thought that the ability to work in an international environment was required in their current job. Table 5 shows the percentage of graduates who reported that these features applied to a high or very high extent to their current job, or to their personal preferences.

A little over half of all graduates reported that their jobs required the ability to function well in an international environment. Half of the graduates reported that the job was characterized by good opportunities to work internationally. The same proportion of alumni deems it important to work internationally.

Table 5
Percentage of respondents who reported that international opportunities were required in, applied to the current job, and were important to them

	Required in current job: functioning in international context 2010-2011	Apply to current job: opportunity to work internationally 2010-2011	Important to alumni: opportunity to work internationally 2010-2011
Humanities and Sciences	77	62	65
Business and Economics	72	63	67
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	31	34	33
Arts and Social Sciences	66	52	69
Psychology and Neuroscience	40	32	32
Law	54	45	47
Maastricht University	54	48	51

† to a high or very high degree

The differences between faculties are quite distinct. Graduates from the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences and the Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience are relatively unlikely to report that their jobs require international skills or provide them with international opportunities. Perhaps not coincidental, alumni from these faculties are also least likely to view international opportunities as being important.

It is interestingly to see the difference between these two faculties when it comes to international careers in Table 4. While 14% of the alumni from the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences from cohort 2010-2011 do work abroad, for the Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience this percentage is 53%. So, combining Tables 3 and 4, even though more than half of the graduates from the Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience works abroad, their jobs do on average not require that much international skills, nor do they offer international opportunities. This suggests that working abroad does not necessarily require functioning in an international context, nor does it involve the opportunity to work internationally. This combination of

a high percentage working abroad with a lower percentage of alumni mentioning international opportunities and international requirements in their jobs also holds for alumni from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. On the other hand, the table also suggests that working in the Netherlands, does not mean that functioning in an international context is not required or that there are no opportunities to work internationally. This seems especially to be the case for alumni from the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences and from the School of Business and Economics. Graduates from the School of Business and Economics, and the Faculty of Humanities and Science report relatively good international opportunities, and are most likely to report that their jobs require international skills.

Satisfaction with Maastricht University's international orientation

A considerable number of alumni work abroad, and a considerable number feels that working in an internationally oriented job is important to them. To what extent do alumni feel that the study programme at Maastricht University provided a good basis for a career in an international labour market? In total, 59% of the 2010-2011 and 49% of the 2005-2006 cohort responded that this applied to a high or very high extent (Table 6). The only faculty with a relatively low percentage of alumni feeling that their UM program offered a good basis for a career in an international labour market is the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences. This is completely in line with the earlier shown percentages in Tables 4 and 5: Alumni from the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences do on average work less often abroad and their jobs require and offer less international activities. There indeed seems to be a much smaller need to prepare students from the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences for a career in an international labour market.

Graduates from the older cohort are generally less likely to assess that their study provided a good basis for an international career. This could indicate that graduates base their assessment on their own experiences, or alternatively, that the university as a whole has become better at preparing students for an international career. There may be support for this latter interpretation in the fact that graduates of the School of Business and Economics - with its established tradition of an internationally oriented education - are relatively positive about this aspect, and remain positive long after graduation.

Table 6

Percentage of alumni feeling that their UM program offered a good basis for a career in an international labour market

	2010-2011	2005-2006
Humanities and Sciences	73	x
Business and Economics	81	74
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	38	24
Arts and Social Sciences	57	48
Psychology and Neuroscience	50	35
Law	53	49
Maastricht University	59	49

x = too few cases

Satisfaction with Maastricht University in general

Finally, alumni were asked how they looked back on their study at Maastricht University and to assess what choices they would make in retrospect. With the benefit of hindsight, would graduates choose the same study at the same university again? In the 2014-2015 cohort, 76% of the alumni would again choose the exact same study at Maastricht University. For the cohorts that graduated in 2010-2011 and 2005-2006, these figures were 77% and 73%, respectively. Table 7 presents the survey results for the three cohorts per faculty. Differences across faculties are small.

Table 7

Percentage of alumni who would again choose the exact same study at Maastricht University

	2014-2015	2010-2011	2005-2006
Humanities and Sciences	82	71	x
Business and Economics	79	80	76
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	79	74	73
Arts and Social Sciences	69	69	69
Psychology and Neuroscience	67	80	62
Law	75	80	77
Maastricht University	76	77	73

x = too few cases

Appendix A

Table 8
Unemployment^{1,2}

	2009 T+1 2007-2008	2010 T+1 2008-2009	2011 T+1 2009-2010	2012 T+1 2010-2011	2013 T+1 2011-2012	2014 T+1 2012-2013		2015 T+1 2013-2014	2016 T+1 2014-2015
Business and Economics	5.7	-	4.9	6	6.3	5.7		3.6	0.0
Health and Life Sciences	0	-	4.4	8.3	16.4	10.3		9.2	8.0
Medicine	0	-	0	1.7	2.5	3.3		2.7	0.0
Arts and Social Sciences	18.5	-	23.9	25.5	33.3	13.7		5.9	5.6
Psychology and Neuroscience	6.1	-	11.4	16.7	25.6	7.6		10.3	14.1
Law	6	-	8.8	7.1	14.3	16.2		10.3	14.6
Maastricht University	5.7	-	7.5	10	13.8	9.2		6.9	6.6
	2009 T+5 2002-2003	2010 T+5 2003-2004	2011 T+5 2004-2005	2012 T+5 2005-2006	2013 T+5 2006-2007	2014 T+5 2007-2008	2015 spring T+5 2008-2009	2015 fall T+5 2009-2010	2016 T+5 2010-2011
Business and Economics	3.2	2.2	5.4	1.9	0	0	0.9	1.5	1.3
Health and Life Sciences	2.4	1.7	2.7	2.1	3.1	3.5	4.3	5.3	3.3
Medicine	0	0	1.5	0	0	1.3	0.0	4.9	0
Arts and Social Sciences	x	x	3.8	10.1	5.7	4.8	4.4	6.7	1.5
Psychology and Neuroscience	1.9	7	10.3	4.2	0	4.3	7.5	2.5	4.9
Law	1.2	4.3	5	0	6.8	3.8	2.6	1.8	0
Maastricht University	2.3	2.5	4.4	2.7	3.2	2.6	2.6	3.4	1.5
	2009 T+10 1997-1998	2010 T+10 1998-1999	2011 T+10 1999-2000	2012 T+10 2000-2001	2013 T+10 2001-2002	2014 T+10 2002-2003	2015 spring T+10 2003-2004	2015 fall T+10 2004-2005	2016 T+10 2005-2006
Business and Economics	0	3	2.8	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.0	0	1.6
Health and Life Sciences	0.6	0.6	2	1.2	3.1	3.7	0.6	2.6	1.6
Medicine	0	0	2.6	1.8	0	2	3.6	1.5	1.2
Arts and Social Sciences	x	x	x	x	x	x	^{4,3}	11.5	4.4
Psychology and Neuroscience	0	0	0	3.8	0	4.9	2.0	3.1	1.7
Law	0	1.5	0	6.1	1.6	0	1.4	0	0
Maastricht University	0.3	1.7	2	2	2	2.1	1.5	3	1.7

¹ too little information on the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences.

² It should be noted that a slightly different definition of employment status was used in the T+5 and T+10 surveys in 2015 and 2016 than in the preceding years. Whereas prior to 2015 a respondent had to report a working week of at least 12 hours to be considered as employed, from 2015 onwards the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition applies, whereby all those who reported at least one hour of work are considered to be employed. In practice this makes little difference, since the vast majority of those employed are working fulltime, but it is possible that a small part of the change in unemployment in 2015 in those cohorts can be attributed to the definition change.

x = too few cases

Table 9International careers of alumni born in and outside the Netherlands^{1,2}

2014-2015 Faculty	Born in NL Work in NL	Born in NL Work outside NL	Born outside NL Work in NL	Born outside NL Work in country of birth	Born outside NL Work in a third country*	N
Business and Economics	53%	7%	7%	22%	11%	105
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	82%	3%	5%	9%	1%	214
Arts and Social Sciences	23%	11%	23%	28%	15%	53
Humanities and Sciences	15%	10%	15%	45%	15%	20
Psychology and Neuroscience	47%	7%	9%	27%	9%	55
Law	56%	4%	3%	27%	10%	71
Maastricht University	60%	5%	8%	20%	7%	518
2010-2011 Faculty	Born in NL Work in NL	Born in NL Work outside NL	Born outside NL Work in NL	Born outside NL Work in country of birth	Born outside NL Work in a third country*	N
Business and Economics	35%	6%	6%	41%	12%	217
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	77%	4%	8%	8%	3%	179
Arts and Social Sciences	24%	3%	7%	49%	17%	59
Psychology and Neuroscience	36%	4%	6%	43%	11%	53
Law	64%	2%	3%	21%	10%	120
Maastricht University	51%	4%	6%	29%	10%	648
2005-2006 Faculty	Born in NL Work in NL	Born in NL Work outside NL	Born outside NL Work in NL	Born outside NL Work in country of birth	Born outside NL Work in a third country*	N
Business and Economics	55%	9%	3%	20%	12%	294
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	91%	3%	4%	1%	1%	247
Arts and Social Sciences	49%	8%	3%	25%	15%	75
Psychology and Neuroscience	67%	9%	11%	13%	0%	55
Law	82%	7%	6%	4%	1%	72
Maastricht University	70%	7%	4%	12%	7%	748

¹ Too little information on the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences in the cohorts 2010-2011 and 2005-2006.² Information about country of birth is not known for complete sample, therefore the percentage working abroad might differ between Table 9 (where country of birth is required) and Table 4 (where country of birth is not needed).

* Third country stands for another country than Netherlands or country of birth.

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Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market
Maastricht University
School of Business and Economics
secretary-roa-sbe@maastrichtuniversity.nl
www.roa.nl

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Researchcentrum voor Onderwijs en Arbeidsmarkt
Postbus 616
6200 MD Maastricht
T +31 43 3883647
F +31 43 3884914
secretary-roa-sbe@maastrichtuniversity.nl
www.roa.nl

Maastricht University
School of Business and Economics